

# Great Falls CONNECTION



Susan Pan, 53 from Great Falls, finishes the Westfields Triathlon.

## Locals Drawn to Westfields Triathlon

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MAY 18-24, 2022

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# BULLETIN BOARD

Submit civic/community announcements at [ConnectionNewspapers.com/Calendar](http://ConnectionNewspapers.com/Calendar). Photos and artwork welcome. Deadline is Thursday at noon, at least two weeks before the event.

## FRIDAY/MAY 20

Dulles Corridor Advisory Committee Meeting. 9:30 a.m. Virtual Meeting. DCAC will meet to receive updates on the Silver Line Metrorail construction project and the Dulles Toll Road. DCAC is an eight-member committee that advises the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority on issues related to the management, improvement and expansion of the Dulles Corridor,

as well as changes to toll rates on the Dulles Toll Road to fund roadway improvements and the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project (Silver Line). The Committee includes representation from the Airports Authority, Fairfax County, Loudoun County and the Commonwealth of Virginia. Visit <https://mwaa.zoom.us/j/89621190593>. Join via Telephone:

Dial: (215) 446-3649 (USA) or (888) 557-8511 (US Toll Free)  
Conference code: 9920925

## SATURDAY/MAY 21

Mental Health First Aid. 1-5 p.m. At Patrick Henry Library, 101 Maple

Ave. E, Vienna. This is an 8-hour course, presented in 2 4-hour blocks on May 14 and 21, designed to give community members key skills to provide initial help and support to someone who may be developing a mental health or substance use problem. Visit the website: <https://librarycalendar.fairfaxcounty.gov/event/8882192>

## SATURDAY/JUNE 4

Join Cub Scouts. 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. At St. Francis Episcopal Church, 9220 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Children in grades K-5 are welcome to join Great Falls Cub Scout Pack 55 for fun, adventure,

life skills, camping and more. Visit the raingutter regatta and learn about our pack. Visit the website: <https://www.gfvscouts.com/>

## SHEPHERD'S CENTER OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA SPRING 2022 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

The Shepherd's Center of Northern Virginia continues to offer educational, health and wellness and entertaining programming to our Senior Community. The programming includes Adventures In Learning, Active Wellness Classes, Great Discussions Book Club, Caregivers' Support Group and

much more.

The Adventures In Learning program began in April and repeats every Thursday for 8 weeks. There is ongoing AIL programming all year long. Topics this session include Health & Wellness, Arts & Entertainment & Travel as well as World Affairs Past & Present.

The Active Aging and Wellness Program is an Exercise Class to improve strength, balance and mobility for older adults. This class is held on Wednesdays (via Zoom) from 10:45-11:45 a.m. for eight week schedules. The cost is \$50/session and you can learn more about it and register on the website.

The Great Decisions Book Club is held the 3rd Friday of every month from February – November. Great Decisions is America's largest discussion program on world affairs. This program is designed by the Foreign Policy Association to bring people together in study groups to discuss, debate and learn about important global challenges of our time.

The Caregivers' Support Group, started in 2002, is for caregivers of adult family members. Most of the care receivers have dementia, but that condition is not a requirement. Some are cared for at home, some in local assisted living facilities, and some are out of state. Meetings are gently facilitated and encourage sharing of feelings, problems, helpful information, and bright spots. These sessions are held the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of every month from 10:00-11:30 a.m. via Zoom. For more information, contact Jack Tarr, 703-821-6838, [jtarr5@verizon.net](mailto:jtarr5@verizon.net); or Lynn Rafferty, 703-508-1365, [radmom8992@gmail.com](mailto:radmom8992@gmail.com).

## SUPPORT GROUPS

Parent Support Partners, a service of the Healthy Minds Fairfax initiative, are all parents who have received training and are qualified to offer education, support and assistance at no cost to families or caregivers. They provide reliable information that families can use in decision-making and are familiar with services and resources that can help families in distress. Visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/healthy-minds/fairfax](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/healthy-minds/fairfax) or [www.nami-northernvirginia.org/parent-peer-support.html](http://www.nami-northernvirginia.org/parent-peer-support.html).

Shepherd's Center of Oakton Vienna Caregivers' Support Group takes place first and third Thursday of each month, 10-11:30 a.m. at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax (UUCF) - Program Building, 2709 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. For caregivers to adult family members with dementia. First and third Thursdays of every month. Hosted by Shepherd's Center of Oakton-Vienna, [scov.org](http://scov.org). Contact facilitator Jack Tarr at 703-821-6838 or [jtarr5@verizon.net](mailto:jtarr5@verizon.net).

Haven of Northern Virginia Support Group. 703-941-7000, [www.havenofnova.org](http://www.havenofnova.org) or [havenofnova@verizon.net](mailto:havenofnova@verizon.net).

## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Volunteers Needed. PRS is looking for empathetic and caring volunteers to make phone calls to older adults who may be feeling socially isolated. The commitment is one 3-hour shift per week for one year. Located in Arlington. Ages 21 & up. Intensive training provided. Learn more and apply: [prsinc.org/caring-volunteering/](http://prsinc.org/caring-volunteering/). Questions? Email [lpadgett@prsinc.org](mailto:lpadgett@prsinc.org).



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# Changing Lives Again

Despite many challenges, nothing stops these ladies.

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

**F**undraising challenges resulting from the COVID-19 crisis cannot stop the Women's Club of Great Falls philanthropy group. Membership has nearly tripled in the last two years, from 8 to 21, increasing the group's volunteer power. Most notably, though, as the group faced a probable pandemic-influenced decline in fundraising revenues through its annual White House Christmas Ornaments sales, it pivoted and targeted new platforms to get the word out.

Because of these efforts, on May 13, the philanthropy group could provide a consistent donation of \$5,500 to Artemis House, Fairfax County's first 24-hour emergency shelter for victims of domestic and sexual violence, stalking, and human trafficking. In 2019, Artemis House expanded to 84 beds to help survivors with and without children recover from traumatic experiences and find secure housing to live away from their abusers.

In a statement, Joe Meyer, executive director, and CEO of Shelter House, Inc., praised the Women's Club of Great Falls for their continued 18 years of support.

"The women and children rely not just on Artemis House but also on community support," Meyer said. "The Women's Club of Great Falls is a perfect example of how a community can support victims and survivors of domestic violence."

Like other Shelter House facilities in Northern Virginia, Artemis House uses a Rapid Rehousing approach. It provides "housing location support, rental aid, and comprehensive case management," to help people experiencing homelessness return to housing as soon as possible.

According to ShelterHouse.org, of the 1,041 people experiencing homelessness on any given night in our community, 51 percent are families, with 32 percent being homeless due to domestic violence. A single family must earn an annual income of \$74,158 to afford a two-bedroom apartment here.

June Kelly is the vice president of the philanthropy group. As the COVID-19 crisis unfolded, she recognized Artemis House's rising financial demands.

"Supporting women fleeing domestic abuse is important (to us)," she said. The group generated

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\$15,000 total during the pandemic years for Artemis House.

Grace McDaniel said she joined the Women's Club of Great Falls "specifically" for the philanthropy group. "It is important to me to put my time and resources into charities and organizations that directly help women and children in the community around me," McDaniel said.

If you or someone you know needs family shelter, call 703-222-0880. Shelter House warns that a person's computer use at home may be watched, and usage history cannot be erased entirely. If a person can track what you do on the internet or computer, use a public computer. If in danger, dial 9-1-1 or Shelter House's 24/7 Domestic Violence Hotline at 703-435-4940.

Front row, left, Pat Kuehnel, philanthropy member; Joe Meyer, executive director, and CEO Shelter House; Nurhan Ahmedova, director of development Shelter House; (back row, from left) June Kelly, vice president of the philanthropy group Women's Club of Great Falls; philanthropy members Stephanie Anderson, Grace McDaniel, and Debbie Klett; and Krysta Aguilar, senior director of emergency housing Artemis House.



June Kelly, vice president of the philanthropy group Women's Club of Great Falls, presents the donation check to Joe Meyer, executive director and CEO of Shelter House, Inc.



From left, Nurhan Ahmedova, director of development Shelter House Inc. and philanthropy group members Pat Kuehnel, Debbie Klett, and Stephanie Anderson.



# Great Falls Resident Paralyzed by Lawn Mower Accident

His story of recovery, one year later.

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

Last summer, on July 5, 2021, Huck Mok of Great Falls suffered a blunt force trauma injury to his spine while using a riding lawnmower, leaving him paralyzed. Riding mowers, lawn tractors, and garden tractors are indispensable machines for maintaining large plots. According to Mok, he was attempting to cut the grass under a tree with low-hanging branches. Mok said he drove the mower toward the tree's trunk and reversed.

Instead, the mower lunged forward. Mok's upper body rammed into the branch so violently that he heard his spine snap. The force knocked Mok backward and off the mower, lying face down on the grass. Mok could not move. For three hours, he called for help, but no one could hear him. Eventually, Mok's wife, Jennifer, came out to see what was taking her husband so long to mow their property. She discovered her husband under a tree, coherent and able to talk but unable to move. "Call 9-1-1," Mok said.

He was seriously injured.

Great Falls Fire & Rescue personnel transported Mok to Reston Hospital, a level 2 trauma center. According to Mok, MRI scans indicated C5-C6 vertebrae damage, with C5 displaced. Rushed into the OR, Mok has no idea that it will be almost nine months before he can return home to live with his family.

Lawnmower accidents are responsible for 85,000 injuries and 70 deaths in the United States each year, according to a 2018 study published in the American Journal of Emergency Medicine. Because of the high-powered machinery and blades, most injuries are severe.

Fast forward to March 29, 2022. "Fortunately, the lawnmower shut itself off," Mok says. His lawnmower was equipped with an operator presence control, a system that stopped the rotary blades when he rose out of the seat.

Mok sits in his electric power wheelchair on stage in the theater at Hunters Woods Trails Edge in Reston. In front of him, an audience of 30 people, his new second family since mid-2021, listens to

his story. Mok has been a resident of the assisted living community, where he received 24-hour personal care assistance and three hours of rehabilitative treatment six days a week.

Mok cannot tell his story without first sharing what his daughter, Andrea, wrote at the time of his injury. Tearing up, he reads, "My father ended up in the hospital after being thrown off the lawnmower and breaking part of his spine. Waiting outside the operation room is scary, but the possibility that my father will experience paralysis and never walk again is devastating. ... My parents always taught me how to look at the positive side instead of focusing on the negative side of things. I know that we will survive and that our family will be together. He always said, 'I fight; you fight; we fight.' Mok looks up at his new friends. He says, "She was 16 years old."

According to Mok, on the day of the accident, the surgeon pushed his displaced D5 back into position and braced it. After surgery, he could feel others touch his limbs but could not move. The spinal cord injury severed the connection between his brain and muscles. "It is a one-way communication," Mok says.

In-hospital spinal cord rehabilitation began and continues until his insurance company tells Mok he must be discharged to return home at the end of the week. A customized wheelchair and a hospital bed are ordered. Mok says his temperature spikes to 104 degrees. He is diagnosed with a "good" urinary tract infection because he must stay in the hospital for another week to get antibiotic IVs.

His muscles begin to spasm.

Mok told himself, "Wait a minute, if my muscles can move, why can't I move them? So, when the muscle spasms, I try moving it myself," Mok said. "After two days, I can move my big toe on the left side; the next day, on the right side."

With the change in mobility status, Mok obtains insurance coverage for assisted living rehabilitation. Mok is transferred to Reston's Trails Edge Assisted Living and cared for by two attendants.

Mok says that initially, they moved him from his bed to his



Huck Mok tells his story in the theater at Hunters Woods Trails Edge in Reston.



Huck Mok tears reading what his daughter Andrea wrote.



The audience's applause is not just for Huck Mok's presentation but for his determined work in physical therapy and his positive attitude.

wheelchair using a sling lift or simply picked him up. Mok, determined to learn to do it himself, tells his attendants to be patient and let him learn to transfer himself. Within a week, he transfers.

Physical therapy helps Mok regain his strength and motor functions. By spring, Mok can stand and walk for short distances. He climbs and descends small steps. Mok says he remembers his surgeon telling him in the days after

surgery that he would be fortunate if he could feed himself with one hand.

On May 5, Mok has been home for a month. Mok says the first-floor library is his bedroom. His new first-floor full bath and laundry room are nearly complete. He is looking forward to doing the laundry. Mok uses his wheelchair or walker to get to the kitchen and teleworks three and a half days a

week.

On the downside, Mok's insurance plan limits the number of physical therapy visits they cover. He is paying out of pocket, and it is expensive. "My insurance stopped covering my physical therapy," Mok says.

He used up his yearly allotment, but it is essential to keep the physical therapy going to make additional gains. Mok says he will appeal their decision.



## OPINION

# One Plus One May Not Equal Two

DELEGATE KENNETH R. "KEN" PLUM



One plus one equaling two is about as basic as one can get in understanding arithmetic. In the current day, parental-rights, children-protectors, textbook-reviewers are challenging many basic concepts that we thought we understood about mathematics and other subjects in the kindergarten to twelfth-grade school curriculum as expressed in the textbooks that are used in the classroom.

If  $1+1=2$  is expressed as a word problem in a textbook, the book may be thrown out for the implications it might suggest. For example, if the problem is expressed as one man or one woman plus one man or one woman equals two men or two women, it may suggest in the minds of some of the reviewers that there is a same sex suggestion inherent within the problem that would be inappropriate for young children to know or to learn about. If the word problem is one man plus one woman equals a couple, there

should be an explanation that couples are married so as to not promote promiscuity. If a textbook writer posed that one black person plus one white person equals two friends the question could be viewed as a divisive problem that is getting too close to being an introduction to Critical Race Theory!

These examples are extreme ones that I have created to make the point that in states like Virginia and Florida the extremists are attempting to dictate school curriculum and materials to meet standards that most educated people will find unbelievable. In Virginia, Governor Glenn Youngkin issued an Executive Order "on Day One to end the use of inherently divisive concepts, including Critical Race Theory." In Florida, state education officials announced last month that 54 of the 132 math textbooks on its adoption list—most of them elementary level—did not make the cut. Some of the books did not align with state content standards,

SEE ONE PLUS ONE, PAGE 9

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## McLEAN COMMUNITY CENTER 2022 GOVERNING BOARD ELECTION



# Vote on McLean Day!



The Governing Board and staff of the McLean Community Center (MCC) strongly encourage all qualified residents to vote for members of its 2022-2023 Governing Board. Your vote sends a very important message of your support of the Center's programs and services.

### WHEN & WHERE

Vote between the hours of 10:30 a.m. and 5 p.m. at the McLean Day 2022 festival on Saturday, May 21, at Lewinsville Park, 1659 Chain Bridge Rd.

### REQUIREMENTS TO VOTE

1. You must be a resident of the MCC tax district (Dranesville Small District 1A); however, you need not be registered to vote in the general election.
2. You must be at least 18 years old by McLean Day to vote for an adult candidate. Adults may vote for up to three candidates.
3. You must be 15 through 17 years old by McLean Day to vote for youth candidates. Youth voters have two votes and may vote for one candidate in the McLean High School boundary area and one candidate in the Langley High School boundary area.
4. You must bring identification as proof of residency, such as a driver's license, passport or utility bill, or you may sign a sworn affidavit statement.

In-person voting at McLean Day is open only to individuals who did not vote early by absentee ballot.

**QUESTIONS?** Contact MCC at [elections@mcleancenter.org](mailto:elections@mcleancenter.org) or 703-790-0123/TTY: 711.

**mcleancenter.org**



Every fourth week of the month, our papers feature our Senior Living section. These include stories focusing on enhanced lifestyle for seniors among Connection readers and their families, including spiritual, physical, mental and financial well-being. Advertising allows you to target the many mature adults exploring new opportunities by showcasing your products and services with the award-winning Connection Newspapers print and digital media.

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## NEWS

# County Supervisors Approve FY2023 Budget

## Lone Republican voices concerns.

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

**T**he Fairfax County Board of Supervisors approved the FY 2023 budget by a vote of 9 to 1, decreasing the tax rate by three cents from the current rate but still resulting in a 6.7 percent tax increase for the typical taxpayer.

Supervisor Pat Herrity (R-Springfield) voted against the budget because property tax increases make living in the county unaffordable for some.

"A 6.7 percent increase in taxes on average is a huge disappointment for our residents, particularly those on fixed incomes, as we are facing record inflation, record gas prices, and the uncertainty of a war in Europe. With over \$1 billion in federal stimulus and COVID funding between the county and schools, make no mistake, we had the flexibility to make this a true flat tax for our residents," Herrity said in a release later that day.

Herrity proposed the Board create a Citizen Task Force on Tax Revenue and Expenditures. The Board did not support the motion.

"Unfortunately, it is clear that this Board is not interested in making Fairfax County an affordable place to live," Herrity said.

The FY 2023 budget provides \$199.4 million in tax relief. The Board reduced the personal property automobile tax by 15 percent and reduced the tax rate and depreciation schedule for business equipment and tools.

Working with the school board, the Board added an extra \$10 million to the budget for affordable housing.

The Board fully funded the transfer request to Fairfax County Public Schools, allowing capital improvements, increasing staff pay, and adding support staff, including school nurses. The amount contributed to

the FCPS Operating Fund increased for the 12th year in a row.

Chairman Jeffrey C. McKay (D) said that this budget fully funds FCPS and provides public county teachers and school staff with a well-deserved pay raise. "Fairfax County is home to the best public schools in the nation... Investing in our public schools is an investment into our future community."

### Issue of Panhandling?

In a separate agenda item, the Board voted 9 to 1 in favor of directing staff to investigate panhandling in the county with Supervisor Herrity opposed. Staff is to provide a set of data-driven recommendations on effectively addressing panhandling.

Chairman Jeff McKay said support for an ordinance that regulates right-of-way activities to keep residents safe must balance free expression rights. He added that the state sets VDOT right of way rules, complicating efforts to regulate panhandling. According to McKay, drivers should avoid giving panhandlers money but consider offering a brochure about county services or donating to a county nonprofit partner.

The Board did not approve Supervisor Herrity's motion to pick up on the issue of panhandling where the Board left off during the pandemic. Herrity urged the Board to move forward with the signage installation, drafting of an ordinance, and a public relations campaign.

"I have been working for the last three years to have the County address panhandling with the solutions the Board committed to in 2019. For us to move forward so far, only to start back at square one is a disservice to our residents and to every motorist and panhandler whose life is in danger in our medians each day we delay. We live in an increasingly urban suburb with very busy intersections where it isn't safe for anyone to be interacting with motorists. The county has great resources to connect with people who are in need, which is a much safer and more sustainable way to help those in need than to give from your car," Herrity said.

## National Kids to Parks Day is May 21

Virginia State Parks will feature kid-friendly programming in celebration of National Kids to Parks Day on May 21 to encourage kids to discover science, history, nature and adventure by exploring the outdoors.

National Kids to Parks Day is sponsored by National Parks Trust <https://parktrust.org/kids-to-parks-day/> and is celebrated annually on the third Saturday of May. This event helps kids and families develop more active, healthy lifestyles and create lifelong memories while offering educational opportunities.

Park programs include numerous activities such as fishing, archery, hiking, paddling, scavenger hunts, and arts and crafts. Events vary by park location and each event focuses on the natural and cultural features of the park. You can view a list of programs by park and start planning your outdoor adventures today. <https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/state-parks/kids-to-parks-day>

Participate in the national photo contest by submitting photos using #MyParkOurFuture on social media and share what your favorite park means to you. <http://parktrust.org/myparkourfuture/>

Be sure to visit to a participating local library and check out a Nature Backpack. In addition to supplies and ideas to enhance your park visit, you will have a



**National Kids to Parks Day is May 21.**

parking pass for free entrance to the Virginia State Park of your choice.

For more information about Virginia State Parks' activities and amenities or to make reservations in one of the more than 1,800 campsites or 300 climate-controlled cabins, call the Virginia State Parks Reservation Center at 800-933-PARK or visit [www.virginiastateparks.gov](http://www.virginiastateparks.gov)

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PHOTO COURTESY OF BLESSED SACRAMENT YOUTH MINISTRY

These students raised \$2,500 to provide medical care, including mental health services, for children who are victims of the war in Ukraine.

## Young Philanthropists

### Madeira student organizes toy drive for child victims of the war in Ukraine.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL  
THE CONNECTION

During a spring break trip to Hungary to visit family, Annamaria Toth Konya Tannon, brought a bit of cheer to the lives of children who are caught in the crosshairs of the war in Ukraine. She delivered more than 200 toys that she'd collected with the help of her classmates and teachers at the Madeira School in McLean, Virginia.

"I spoke to my grandmother, who lives in Szeged, about different supplies I could bring," said Tannon. "[She] told me that almost everyone she knew donated clothes and other items specific to adults. That made me think about the children and how they could not bring many toys along in their haste to evacuate. This inspired me to have a toy drive."

As gruesome images of destruction continue to dominate media coverage of the war in Ukraine, students like Tannon are working to meet the needs of its youngest victims. Their help is particularly impactful because they are in the same age group as the demographic they are working to serve.

"It is very sad to think about the experiences of the refugees from war, but it is heartening that so many people in the United States and Europe are trying to help these refugees," said Tannon. "Everyone was happy to donate, and many people even bought new toys for the drive. I know their donations are very much appreciated and loved."

It is through charitable activities that students can empower themselves to bring change when they see injustice in the world, say educators.

"The great thing about student philanthropy at Madeira is that students really take charge of the experience because they are so passionate about helping the world beyond our local community," said Kelli Perkins, Dean of Student Life and Culture. "When we

think of Madeira's mission of launching women who will change the world, we tend to think first about cultivating leadership skills. Service to humankind is a critical component of effective and transformative leadership."

Tannon's parents, Annamaria Konya Tannon and Jay Tannon, say that a commitment to serving others is one of their family's core values. "We found our daughter's empathy and compassion for the innocent victims of war heartening," said Jay. "Naturally, we are proud of her efforts to help in a small way, alleviate the anxiety these children must face. We think that those of us in a position to help people in need should do so."

Tannon delivered the toys to the The Hungarian Red Cross. "I spoke with the volunteers who transferred the donations to the villages on the Hungarian border with Ukraine," she said. "They told me that ... the Ukrainian children receiving the items would be so happy to have them."

A group of students from Potomac, Bethesda and Chevy Chase hosted a spaghetti dinner recently and raised \$2,500 for the health care needs of children impacted by violence in Ukraine.

The young philanthropists, members of the Youth Ministry at Blessed Sacrament Church in Chevy Chase, donated the funds to Project Hope, a humanitarian organization that sends medical professionals to assist with disaster relief efforts in countries around the world.

Bethesda resident John Walsh, son of Project Hope's founder William Walsh, attended the dinner and announced that 100 percent of the money raised by the students will be used to provide care to seriously ill Ukrainian refugee children.

One of the most significant medical concerns is the long-term effects of war and trauma on the mental health and emotional well-being of the victims, reports Rabih Torbay, Project HOPE's President and CEO. "A majority of the refugees and asylum seekers are women and children who are unsure whether they will ever see their husbands, fathers, and sons again. Families have been ripped apart. We must ... remember that, unlike physical wounds, [mental health] injuries are not easily seen or stitched up."

## Back to School

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Jonathan Besko, 39 from Vienna, as he crosses the finish line.



George Bochenek, 36 from Vienna, sprints to the finish with a time of 1:33:16.



Kasey Klopfenstein, 28 from Vienna, during the 3.1 mile run.



Susan Pan, 53 from Great Falls, finishes the Westfields Triathlon.



The Westfields Triathlon begins a little after 7 a.m. with the elite competitors.

# Westfields Sprint Triathlon Draws Hundreds

## Splash & Dash for kids.

**T**he eighth annual Westfields Triathlon took place on April 24 at the Cub Run RECenter in Chantilly. The event was hosted by the Westfields Business Owners Association and put on by Revolution3 Triathlon. The sprint distances

included a 250-yard pool swim, a 12-mile bike ride, and a 3.1-mile run. Todd Burns, 42 from Arlington, placed first overall with a time of 54:47.81.

New for this year was a sprint distance duathlon option with a 1 mile run. There were also two shorter Splash & Dash swimming and running distances for the kids. The Westfields Triathlon kicked off the triathlon season in the DC Metro area.



Michaela Witczak, 37 of Centreville, during the 12 mile bike ride.



Melissa Mattes, 57 from Centreville, is enjoying her ride.



## OPINION

# One Plus One May Not Equal Two

FROM PAGE 5

called the Benchmarks for Excellent Student Thinking—or BEST—or they included “prohibited topics” and “unsolicited strategies,” such as Critical Race Theory (CRT), officials said. Since they provided few specific examples, I imagined the examples I gave above. After all, who gets to decide what are “divisive concepts”?

In Virginia where Governor Youngkin seems to be trying to edge out Florida’s Governor Ron DeSantis as ultra-conservative governor of the year, the Governor has included the new mathematics curriculum adopted by the Board of Education as being unacceptable for it violates his promise to take divisive materials from the curriculum and certainly Critical Race Theory. Since the Governor has not been able to offer any specific examples of his concerns, it is left to me and others to speculate what he has in mind other than to build on discontent by a small number of parents and to score political points.

I hope that others will come to the rescue of these two governors and show us how their political rhetoric will be carried out in practice and that my wild examples are not part of what they have in mind.

## BULLETIN BOARD

Submit civic/community announcements at [ConnectionNewspapers.com/Calendar](http://ConnectionNewspapers.com/Calendar). Photos and artwork welcome. Deadline is Thursday at noon, at least two weeks before the event.

### FRIDAY/MAY 20

Dulles Corridor Advisory Committee Meeting. 9:30 a.m. Virtual Meeting. DCAC will meet to receive updates on the Silver Line Metrorail construction project and the Dulles Toll Road. DCAC is an eight-member committee that advises the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority on issues related to the management, improvement and expansion of the Dulles Corridor, as well as changes to toll rates on the Dulles Toll Road to fund roadway improvements and the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project (Silver Line). The Committee includes representation from the Airports Authority, Fairfax County, Loudoun County and the Commonwealth of Virginia. Visit <https://mwaa.zoom.us/j/89621190593>. Join via Telephone:

Dial: (215) 446-3649 (USA) or (888) 557-8511 (US Toll Free)

Conference code: 9920925

### SATURDAY/MAY 21

Mental Health First Aid. 1-5 p.m. At Patrick Henry Library, 101 Maple Ave. E, Vienna. This is an 8-hour course, presented in 2 4-hour blocks on May 14 and 21, designed to give community members key skills to provide initial help and support to someone who may be developing a mental health or substance use problem. Visit the website: <https://librarycalendar.fairfaxcounty.gov/event/8882192>

### SATURDAY/JUNE 4

Join Cub Scouts. 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. At St. Francis Episcopal Church, 9220 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Children in grades K-5 are welcome to join Great Falls Cub Scout Pack 55 for fun, adventure, life skills, camping and more. Visit the raingutter regatta and learn about our pack. Visit the website: <https://www.gfvascouts.com/>

### SHEPHERD’S CENTER OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA SPRING 2022 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

The Shepherd’s Center of Northern Virginia continues to offer educational, health and wellness and entertaining programming to our Senior Community. The programming includes Adventures In Learning, Active Wellness Classes, Great Discussions Book Club, Caregivers’ Support Group and much more.

The Adventures In Learning program began in April and repeats every Thursday for 8 weeks. There is ongoing AIL programming all year long. Topics this session include Health & Wellness, Arts & Entertainment & Travel as well as World Affairs Past & Present.

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## Here's What's Happening at MCC!

### The Old Firehouse



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### T.G.I.F. Carnival Rides



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Lewinsville Park  
Friday, May 20, 2 p.m.-10 p.m.  
Buy tickets online or onsite.

### McLean Day 2022



Celebrating Our Hometown  
Saturday, May 21, 11 a.m.-5 p.m.  
Lewinsville Park  
Free admission

### Governing Board Meeting



Wednesday, May 25, 6:30 p.m.  
Regular Meeting

### Presented by The Alden



Performing Arts Documentary  
Thursday, May 26, 1 p.m.  
Free; Registration required.

### Pass on Plastic!



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**CALENDAR**

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**Let us know about an upcoming event**  
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# CALENDAR

## SATURDAYS UNTIL DECEMBER

The Reston Farmers Market (sponsored by the Fairfax Co. Park Authority) Lake Anne Village 8 a.m.-noon. SNAP beneficiaries receive up to \$20 match <http://restonfarmersmarket.com/>

## NOW THRU MAY 25

Watercolor Exhibition. At Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Celebrating a Lifetime of Art showcases the watercolors of Catharine Noland (1920-2020). A reception will be held Saturday, May 14, from 2-4 p.m. Event start and stop times correspond to normal library hours, which are available at: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/great-falls>

## NOW THRU DEC. 31

Crafts for Kids. 10 a.m. to 12 noon. At Reston Art Gallery and Studios, 11400 Washington Plaza W at Lake Anne, Reston. Free, themed art projects for children (with guardian) are offered at Reston Art Gallery and Studios every Saturday from 10 a.m. until 12 p.m. Visit the website: [www.restonartgallery.com](http://www.restonartgallery.com)

## MCLEAN FARMERS MARKET OPENS

The McLean Farmers Market has opened for the 2022 season on Friday, May 6th, at Lewinsville Park, 1659 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. The market will run every Friday from 8 a.m. to noon through November 11. Local farmers and producers will sell fresh produce and fruits; breads and pastries; prepared foods; meats; herbs; flowers, and more. All products are grown or produced by the vendors and come from within 125 miles of Fairfax County. Visit: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets/>

## MAY 20-30

The Jurassic Encounter Dinosaur Walk Thru Experience. At Bull Run Events Center, 7700 Bull Run Drive, Centreville. The Jurassic Encounter will transform the events center into a walk-through experience featuring more than 50 static and moving, life-like dinosaurs that both entertain and educate. Also enjoy Digging for Bones, the Dino Village, shopping, food, free photo-ops, games, bouncy house and more. The exhibit will open on Friday, May 20 from 2 p.m. to 7 p.m. and all other days from 10 a.m. - 7 p.m. Tickets start at \$19.00 per person (anyone two years and older will need a ticket). Children must be accompanied by a parent or guardian at all times. There are also special add-on prize packs for the kids to get souvenirs. Parking for the event is free and pets are welcome. Web: <http://feeltheroar.com>

## SATURDAY/MAY 21

Book Signing Event. 2-4 p.m. At Scrawl Books, 11911 Freedom Drive, Reston. Emily Suñez, author and illustrator of The Healing Journal: Guided Prompts & Inspiration for Life with Illness, will be signing copies of her book and chatting with attendees at Scrawl Books. Visit the website: <https://www.scrawlbooks.com/event/author-emily-sunez-presents-healing-journal>

## SATURDAY/MAY 21

McLean Day. 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. At Lewinsville Park, 1659 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. The free, outdoor festival features a wide variety of rides, games, activities and performances. Patrons can come enjoy the large carnival ride on Friday, May 20, from 2 p.m. to 10 p.m. In addition to the large rides on the parking lot, the Kids' Way area of the park offers smaller, ticketed rides especially for younger children. Also, for the young and young-at-heart are costumed superhero characters who will be available for photos. Other free activities include laser tag, Bubble Ball, two rock-climb-



The McLean Day celebration will take place Saturday, May 21 at Lewinsville Park in McLean.

ing walls, balloon twisters, a magician and a petting zoo. Free performances will be offered throughout the festival on the Community Stage. Young dancers enrolled in MCC's Art in Motion Dance classes will open the show at 11:05 a.m. The McLean Community Players will follow at 1:05 p.m. The Alden's Unruly Theatre Project teen improv group will perform at 1:45 p.m., followed by the McLean High School Chorus at 2:25 p.m. The McLean Citizens Association will present its Teen Character Award at 3 p.m. and G'NASH, a five-member rock band comprised of McLean High School students, will perform at 4 p.m. In addition, a Jugglers' Stage, located close to the children's ride area, offers free performances throughout the event. Visit: [www.mcleancenter.org/special-events](http://www.mcleancenter.org/special-events) or call the Center at 703-790-0123/TTY: 711.

## MAY 21-22

Tephra ICA Festival (formerly Northern Virginia Fine Arts Festival). At Reston Town Square Park, 11900 Market St., Reston. Tephra Institute of Contemporary Art (Tephra ICA) and Reston Community Center (RCC) announce the Trisha Brown Dance Company as the headlining performers at the Tephra ICA Festival. TBDC is a contemporary dance company dedicated to the performance and preservation of the work of Founding Artistic Director and Choreographer, Trisha Brown.

## MAY 21-22

Girls on the Run Spring Registration. GOTR NOVA will be offering an in-person, 10-week curriculum for the Spring 2022 season. Two in-person 5Ks presented by Cigna will be held on May 21st and 22nd in Sterling and Ballston, respectively. Teams will continue to be school and community-based to further our outreach efforts in being accessible to every girl across Northern Virginia. Currently, 105 teams throughout Alexandria, Arlington, Fairfax, Falls Church, Loudoun, Manassas, Manassas Park, and Prince William are open for Spring 2022 registration through March 1, 2022. For more information about spring registration and sites for Girls on the Run of NOVA, visit [www.gotrnova.org](http://www.gotrnova.org).

## SUNDAY/MAY 22

Concerts on the Green. 6-8 p.m. At the Village Centre Green, Great Falls. Featuring Wes Tucker and the Skilletts. Fine Roots rock with a little old school funk. Hosted by Costa Dentistry. Come relax at the Village Centre Green and enjoy laid-back evenings of good music and good times with your neighbors.

## SATURDAY/MAY 28

"Sixteen Candles" Movie. 7:30 p.m. At The Winery at Bull Run, 15950 Lee Highway, Centreville. Part of '80s movie night. Tickets \$20.

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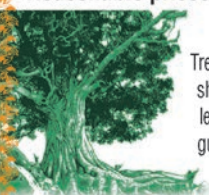
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## A Little Perspective



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Last week's column addressed the issue of uncertainty which, as a long-surviving and still-undergoing-treatment cancer patient, I am very familiar. In fact, 'uncertainty' becomes my daily bread whether I'm hungry or not. I learned early on in my cancer life that there are no guarantees. Instead, there are ups and downs all-around. If life in the cancer lane were an amusement ride, it would be the most feared, gut-wrenching, life-altering roller coaster you ever had the misfortune of experiencing. The significant difference being that roller coasters don't kill you. They scare you certainly, but, when the ride is finished so too is your involvement. Unfortunately, for a cancer patient, the ride is never over.

And it's some ride, too. A ride where your life really is at risk, and one that constantly changes direction and takes you places emotionally and spiritually you likely never imagined. Moreover, nothing really prepares you for the diagnosis and it's only the prognosis that might provide a little relief if you're lucky. Many cancers are survivable now compared to the previous generation. Nevertheless, cancer remains the most feared word in any conversation, especially when it's directed at you by an oncologist with whom an appointment has been set after you have taken multiple diagnostic steps to confirm your diagnosis.

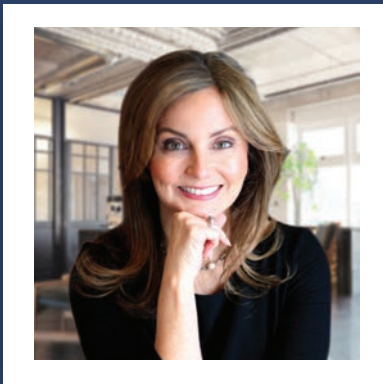
For me, the process took about six weeks from when I first went to an emergency room complaining of migrating pain in my right rib cage area (after it being on the left side a few days earlier) and having difficulty breathing and catching my breath to two sets of chest X-Rays, one CT scan, one PET scan and finally a surgical biopsy. I visited multiple doctors in multiple locations until the diagnosis was confirmed and the initial appointment with an oncologist was arranged.

A week or so prior to meeting the oncologist, my internal medicine doctor had called me at work with the results of the previous week's biopsy. When he asked me if I wanted to meet at his office to discuss the results, I figured the news was bad, but I never imagined how bad it would be: non-small cell lung cancer, stage IV. How bad you ask? "13 month to two years" prognosis, that's how. I was age 54 and half.

Much has changed in the past 13-plus years since that late February 2009 shock. For one thing, and most significantly, my diagnosis. I am now a papillary thyroid cancer patient and have had a thyroidectomy to surgically remove both my thyroid glands. My prognosis however is not exactly "terminal" as it was when I was diagnosed with lung cancer, but it's precarious nonetheless as previous columns have explained (the one medication that's effective has a three-year window: I'm nearing the end of year two) and at present, there's no new options. Still, I can't worry about things for which I have no control (another lesson). As concerns what happens to my life when the 10 mg lenvima is no longer effective? To invoke Scarlett O'Hara at the end of "Gone with the Wind:" "I'll worry about that tomorrow."

Kenny Lourie is an Advertising Representative for The Potomac Almanac & The Connection Newspapers.





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